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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

ANNEX 3-2 IRREGULAR WARFARE

CATALOG OF DOCTRINE TOPICS

Last Updated: 12 July 2016

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INTRODUCTION TO IRREGULAR WARFARE

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Airpower provides essential capabilities to the joint force across the range of military operations. This annex provides operational level doctrinal guidance for irregular warfare (IW) and presents fundamental IW principles and core IW activities in the context of challenges to US national security. Next, this annex defines IW, and highlights the role of airpower in IW and the main characteristics of IW that should be taken into account when developing IW-related strategy, plans, assessment, and command and control. This annex concludes with how Air Force forces are organized and presented, and Air Force capabilities are used to support IW operations.

Strategic Context

In some ways, Air Force operations are the same regardless of the type of warfare or category of mission activity. However, Airmen must be able to clearly articulate how unique Air Force capabilities may be applied to achieve IW effects. Generally, the distinction between IW and traditional warfare arises in how capabilities are applied to achieve different ends and how missions have different challenges.

For example, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance demands for IW can be different and more challenging than with traditional warfare, and airspace in many IW environments tends to be more permissive, enabling the Air Force to use other, perhaps less expensive or less technologically advanced assets and capabilities. Preparing for activities in IW begins with this foundational understanding, and shapes the Airman's perspective on operational execution.

The speed, range, and flexibility of airpower play a critical role in helping a nation earn and sustain legitimacy with support from its population. Broadly speaking, airpower extends a nation's reach and brings rapid response and improved situational awareness. These in turn help nations establish the physical and virtual infrastructure essential for internal growth and well-being. Airpower also bolsters all instruments of national power and provides visible, practical, and effective means to consolidate governance and provide for the populace, and allows a nation to:

- Provide political leaders immediate, largely unimpeded access to all operational domains (air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace) to demonstrate governance and legitimacy by delivering goods, services, and humanitarian relief.

- Support military and civil ground forces in providing security and rapid response.
- Deny adversaries unfettered access to ungoverned, under-governed, and remote areas.
- Patrol and help secure porous borders.
- Promote civil sector advancement, especially in air and cyberspace infrastructure.
- Deter and defeat external aggression.
- Inhibit hostile forces from moving openly or in large numbers without fear of detection and attack.
- Strengthen internal security.

The term “irregular warfare” evolved from efforts to define those conflicts that manifest in violent and non-violent adversarial actions, but typically lack traditional large-scale force-on-force confrontations. Irregular warfare has been an aspect of conflict throughout history, and will likely continue in the foreseeable future for two primary reasons: stability challenges due to weakly governed nations, and the prohibitive cost of waging traditional war. In many cases, IW-based strategies are a function of limited capability, and are often the only option available to a weaker force.

Before the inception of the Air Force, airmen had a history of conducting non-traditional warfare, beginning with the Carpetbagger and Air Commando operations in World War II, soon followed by the use of US airmen advisors to the Greek government during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) and to the Philippine government in their suppression of the Hukbalahap Rebellion (1946-1954). The Air Force gained further experience in conducting and supporting IW during the Vietnam War and in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Irregular warfare has dominated the scope of conflict for US forces since 2001. While the focus of US strategy may change, airpower will remain a key contributor to US IW capabilities. Today, our national strategic guidance requires the military to maintain the capability to conduct IW.

Irregular warfare is not a “lesser” form of warfare in terms of sophistication or effectiveness and may be conducted stand-alone, or alongside traditional forms of warfare. The US must maintain the capacity to not only defend against IW operations, but conduct offensive IW operations against enemies ranging from insurgents to near-peer enemies across the range of conflict.

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IRREGULAR WARFARE FUNDAMENTALS

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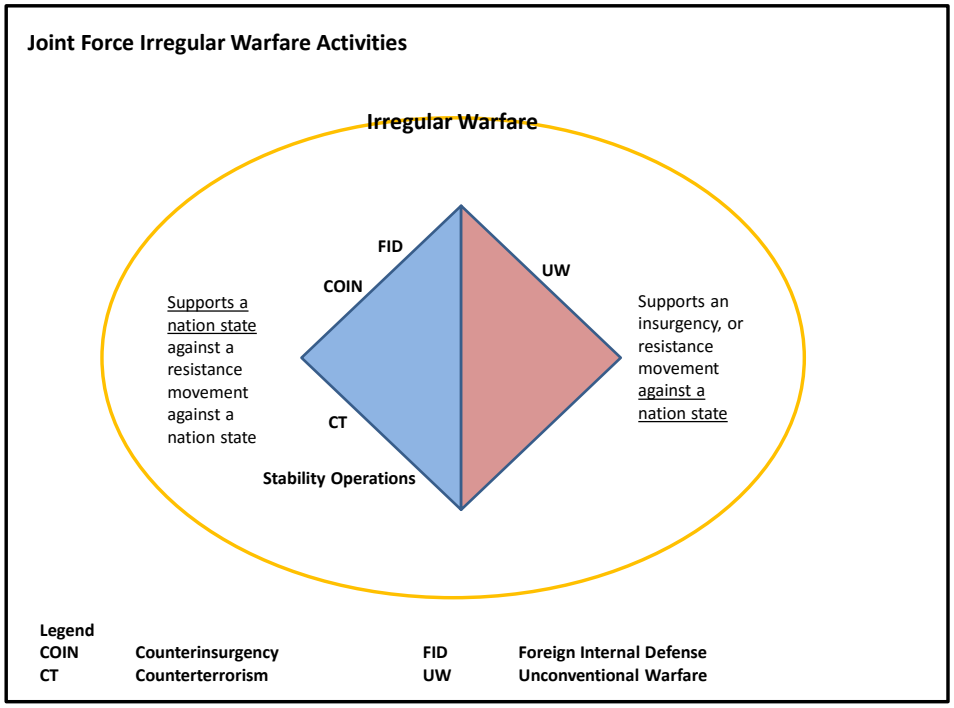
This section defines irregular warfare (IW) and describes the scope of IW operations. It also summarizes the unique challenges of IW.

Defining IW and Its Unique Challenges

Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, describes IW as "a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s)." IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will. The key distinctions between IW and traditional warfare are the context and conduct of the conflict, particularly with regard to the population. Traditional warfare regards the population on the periphery of the conflict, whereas IW considers the population as central to the conflict. Therefore, traditional warfare focuses on coercing an adversary's key political leaders or defeating an adversary's military capability. By contrast, IW focuses on an IW partner's struggle for legitimacy and influence of a relevant population. As a result, IW requires a different level of operational thought and threat comprehension.

This annex is based on the premise that IW is best viewed as a form of warfare that is both different from and complementary to traditional warfare and should not be viewed as a subset form of major operations. Despite this difference, it is important to emphasize that contemporary warfare often combines aspects of both.

The figure, *Joint Force Irregular Warfare Activities*, displays the five recognized IW activities as discussed in DOD policy. Foreign internal defense (FID), counterinsurgency (COIN), counterterrorism (CT), and stability operations are typically conducted in support of a nation state against a resistance movement opposing that state. Unconventional warfare (UW) typically supports an insurgency, or a resistance movement against a state.



Joint Force Irregular Warfare Activities

Direct IW Operations

The Department of Defense distinguishes between IW operations and activities conducted by the joint force by, with, and through partner nations (PNs) to address mutual interests with the United States. Each activity requires a scoping of the operation or activity and ensures the proper authorities are delegated.

IW Operations fall under one of the following categories: COIN, CT, FID, stability operations, and UW.

Counterinsurgency is defined as "comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes" [1]. The purpose of an insurgency is to overthrow and replace an established government or societal structure, or to compel a change in behavior or policy by the government or societal structure.

COIN operations require commitments of assets and personnel. The United States normally conducts COIN operations when its mutual strategic interests with a PN are at stake, and the PN is incapable of conducting any substantial operations, the situation has deteriorated significantly (approaching a failed state environment), or when there is no effective government in power (i.e., a failed state).

An insurgency may extend beyond the borders of a single threatened state. Non-state actors such as transnational terrorist and criminal organizations often represent a security threat beyond areas they inhabit. Some pose a direct concern for the US and

its partners. Non-state actors often team with insurgents to profit from a conflict. Insurgencies can expand to include local, regional, and global entities. This may require the US to employ forces not only to help defeat an insurgency in a single country, but also to defeat small extremist cells operating in other countries or ungoverned areas. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the ability to affect international commerce give small, non-state organizations potentially disproportionate capabilities.

Counterterrorism activites and operations are taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals. Successful CT necessitates stable, protracted engagement that leads to familiarization with the operating environments and facilitates security and stability for key populations. It requires a coordinated use of the instruments of national power to negate the terrorist network's physical or psychological violence and undermine its power, will, credibility, and legitimacy among the population. Security is of the utmost importance. In its absence, terrorist networks are able to exacerbate or exploit a population's grievances and gain influence. For more information see JP 3-26, *Counterterrorism*.

Foreign Internal Defense is defined as "participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization, to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security."[1] FID is often conducted in conjunction with COIN, CT, special operations, etc., in support of a PN. However, it is not solely a military function. The diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments of national power are keys to successful FID. Special operations forces and general purpose forces both play critical roles in preparing for and executing FID activities to include assessing, advising, training, assisting, and equipping IW partner forces. For more information, see Annex 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

Stability operations is an "overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the US in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief."[2] For more information, see JP 3-07, *Stability Operations*.

Unconventional warfare is defined in JP 1-02, DOD Dictionary, as "activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area." UW operations can be used to exploit a hostile power's political, military, economic, and psychological vulnerability by developing and sustaining indigenous resistance forces to accomplish US and coalition strategic objectives. UW can include a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by, with, and through indigenous or surrogate forces that are organized, trained, equipped,

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[1] JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*
[2] JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*

supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery.

US Special Operations Command is the lead DOD component for UW, although in some cases general purpose forces support is required. UW operations are usually conducted in enemy-held, enemy-controlled, or politically sensitive territory. For more information see JP 3-05.1, *Unconventional Warfare*.

IW Activities

Under the umbrella of security assistance programs, the DOD is involved in a variety of activities, as part of the whole of government concept, by, though, and with PNs to build partner capacity and assist with internal defense and development. While this may include things such as education, bilateral agreements, and foreign military sales, the DOD is also prepared to employ joint forces in support of executing security assistance initiatives through joint missions in both combat and non-combat environments. The DOD will also conduct security force assistance (SFA) to provide expertise to support the development of capacity and capability of foreign security forces and other PN governmental institutions.

The US engages with PNs in various activities to support the PN's government legitimacy and help develop internal defense and development strategies to meet both US and PN objectives.

Security Sector Assistance (SSA) United States SSA policy is aimed at strengthening the ability of the United States to help allies and PNs build their own security capacity, consistent with the principles of good governance and rule of law. SSA is mandated by Presidential Policy Directive 23, *Security Sector Assistance*. SSA refers to the policies, programs, and activities the US uses to:

- Engage with foreign partners and help shape their policies and actions in the security sector.
- Help foreign partners build and sustain the capacity and effectiveness of legitimate institutions to provide security, safety, and justice for their people.
- Enable foreign partners to contribute to efforts that address common security challenges.
- Build PN's medical capacity and capability to respond and take care of its citizens.

DOD programs should be conducted to achieve four SSA goals:

- Help PNs build sustainable capacity to address common security challenges, to disrupt and defeat transnational threats; sustain legitimate and effective public safety, security, and justice sector institutions; support legitimate self-defense;

contribute to US or partner military operations which may have urgent requirements; maintain control of their territory and jurisdiction waters including air, land, and sea borders; and help indigenous forces assume greater responsibility for operations where US military forces are present.

- ✪ Promote partner support for US interests through cooperation on national, regional, and global priorities. Priorities include military access to airspace and basing rights; improved interoperability and training opportunities; cooperation on law enforcement, counterterrorism, counternarcotic, combating organized crime and arms trafficking; countering weapons of mass destruction proliferation, and terrorism; and intelligence, peacekeeping, and humanitarian efforts.

- ✪ Promote universal values, such as good governance, transparent and accountable oversight of security forces, rule of law, transparency, accountability, delivery of fair and effective justice, and respect for human rights.

- ✪ Strengthen collective security and multinational defense arrangements and organizations, including helping to build the capacity of troop- and police-contributing nations to United Nations and other multilateral peacekeeping missions, as well as through regional exercises, expert exchanges, and coordination of regional intelligence and law enforcement information exchanges.

Security Cooperation (SC) is defined in JP 1-02, DOD Dictionary, "all DOD interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to host nations."

Security Assistance (SA) is defined in JP 1-02, DOD Dictionary, as "group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the US provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives." SA fosters interoperability between US forces and our allies. Within applicable legal and policy constraints, Air Force personnel can train and equip friendly foreign forces. The DOD and other government agencies train foreign militaries and law enforcement personnel through several different programs, some funded by accounts within the DOD budget and others by the Department of State-administered foreign aid budget. SA is designed to help selected countries meet their internal defense needs and to promote sustainable development and growth of responsive institutions. The joint force commander should distinguish between personnel assigned to a combatant command performing a train-and-advise mission and military personnel training host nation forces pursuant to authorities under Title 22, United States Code, *Foreign Relations and Intercourse*, and who fall under the authority of the country's Chief of Mission. Those personnel performing a Title 22 security assistance mission, by law, are restricted from performing duties of a combatant nature. If the military personnel are performing a Title 22 security

assistance mission of a non-combat nature in a host nation with a security environment akin to a combat zone, the Chief of Mission may delegate or defer the responsibility for force protection to the combatant commander. Iraq is an example where there is a mix of Title 22 foreign military sales cases and Title 10 training occurring simultaneously.

Delivery of foreign military sales items can be performed in conjunction with combined operations and contingencies or with other training programs conducted by the geographic combatant commands. These operations may also be conducted by various departments and agencies of the US government.

Security Force Assistance (SFA) is defined as "activities that contribute to unified action by the US Government (USG) to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions." SFA is conducted to assist PNs in their efforts to defend against transnational and internal threats to stability. SFA spans the range of military operations and includes military engagement, security cooperation, crisis response, and contingency operations. It can even be accomplished during major operations and campaigns in support of US national strategic objectives. SFA should be closely coordinated with relevant USG agencies. FID and SFA are similar at the tactical level where advisory skills are applicable to both. At the operational and strategic levels, both FID and SFA focus on preparing foreign security forces (FSF) to combat lawlessness, subversion, insurgency, terrorism, and other internal threats to their security; however, SFA also prepares FSF to defend against external threats and to perform as part of an international force. For more information see JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

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STRATEGY, PLANNING, AND ASSESSMENT IN IRREGULAR WARFARE

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It is important to emphasize that while irregular warfare (IW) engagements tend to have similar characteristics, each IW engagement is unique and each situation should be analyzed independently before developing a strategy**.** Each situation will have a different balance of diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments that might be used to promote a nation's interest or secure a state from IW adversaries.

The center of gravity (COG) in IW is the partner nation's (PN's) population as opposed to fielded forces and command and control (C2), as in most traditional conflicts. To exploit a COG in IW, strategies should be developed with the goal of enhancing PN or IW partner legitimacy and influence, while eroding an adversary's power, influence, and will, and protecting one's own COG.

One of the primary ways to influence this COG is to identify, assess, and resolve underlying grievances within the population. If the PN's government fails to address grievances perceived by the population to be valid in a timely manner, the population will continue to be disaffected. Such a disaffected population could stop supporting the legitimate government or be motivated to provide direct or indirect support to an insurgency operating among the general population. An adversary may attempt to fill the void left by a government that does not adequately address these grievances.

Identifying, finding, and separating individual adversaries and networks from the general population are difficult. In addition, depending on the location of the target, the effects desired are often "soft" and may require nonkinetic means. Targeting opportunities, when they emerge, may be time sensitive, and collateral damage restrictions can be challenging. As a result, it is essential to thoroughly understand the geopolical environment in the PN and region in question. These factors range from basing locations and the regional environmental concerns to the political climate of the host nation, PNs, and surrounding states. They also include the influence of the adversary among both the PN government and the local population.

When planning IW operations, planners should consider the human aspects of military operations. To be successful, Airmen should be trained on the necessary approaches and capabilities to understand, anticipate, and influence the decisions and associated

behavior of relevant groups, individuals and populations. The goal is to ensure stability, prevent and mitigate conflict, and when necessary fight and defeat adversaries. An example includes medical engagements that enhance access and expand the PN's sphere of influence within its borders. Addressing a PN's medical capacity and capability to respond and take care of its citizens builds the government's and institution's legitimacy. Foremost in the mind of a planner should be the application of the constructive effects of airpower to contain or prevent irregular challenges, and constant attention not to be lured into seeing the conflict as programming fires. Outright defeat of enemy forces is very difficult in IW. The strategists and campaign designers employing airpower should seek to use airpower to isolate the adversary from the populace, and enhance the relationship between the friendly partner and the populace. Constructive effects of airpower can also include infrastructure construction by Air Force civil engineer teams that enable essential services and corresponding jobs for a population. Food, water, shelter, medical, justice, and policing capabilities enhance legitimacy. Airmen should proactively advocate and highlight airpower's contribution to these goals early in operational design and joint planning. Humanitarian aspects of military operations can also be important in any operation; they form an essential and sometimes primary arsenal of airpower effects in IW.

Finally, strategy should account for the fact that the population may not be homogenous in all areas of the PN. Cultural, geographical, religious, and economic differences within a state or region may motivate different parts of the population differently. Thus, different strategies may need to be employed within one engagement to achieve desired effects.

Focus on Stability

Where traditional warfare focuses more on conducting combat operations against adversary forces, IW focuses largely on achieving and maintaining stability. A key aspect of earning legitimacy from the population is the ability of a PN to achieve and maintain stability. The legitimate local government, the US government, and international agencies, as well as nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations cannot effectively work in an area until it is secure. If a national government is weak, corrupt, or incompetent, or if the governing authority is absent, a triggering shock can exacerbate an already difficult situation. This shock can produce widespread suffering, grow popular dissatisfaction, and result in civil unrest—all of which can be intensified by several interrelated factors. The absence of key government functions, competing ideologies, widespread lawlessness, poor economic performance, pronounced economic disparities, and in some cases, a serious external threat, all influence the strategic context of any operation. In the specific case of unconventional warfare (UW), the external supporters of insurgent forces may create or leverage instability as a means to delegitimize and demoralize a government or occupying power with a goal of disrupting, defeating, or overthrowing it.

Long-term, Persistent Political and Military Commitment

The protracted approach that adversaries may use in IW requires a long-term strategy to achieve continuing advantage. Winning a protracted conflict requires winning the struggle of ideas, undermining the legitimacy of a competing ideology, addressing grievances perceived by the population to be valid, reducing an enemy's influence, and depriving the enemy of the support of the people. It requires a "crawl, walk, run" mentality when developing PN infrastructure and security. IW requires patience and adaptation. This has a significant impact on personnel rotations, equipment wear and tear, and the impact on training and education early in the operational design process.

Persistence is intrinsic to effective IW strategy, planning,and operations. The joint force should use its long-term regional engagement strategy to shape the operational environment and influence adversaries. Episodic short-duration deployments to at-risk states may be an inadequate operational approach, because the short-term results of these deployments may be overcome by adversary countermeasures and by the inertia that is common in failed and failing states. Continuity of effort hinges upon the ability of joint force members to establish and maintain long-term interpersonal relationships with their counterparts in US missions and with foreign governments, traditional political authorities, and security forces. The effect of IW strategy and plans may not be readily apparent, requiring years and even decades before tangible results are evident and can be assessed.

Long-term political and military commitments

Long-term commitments often consist of efforts to increase partnership capacity by building or rebuilding infrastructure. Airmen can positively affect construction and reconstruction efforts, create government legitimacy, and reinforce citizenship principles by involving the local population during all aspects of the building or rebuilding process. It is important that construction efforts intended for the local population use are planned, designed, and constructed by local nationals. Regional building standards should be accompanied by long-term maintenance plans that do not include external financial or technical aid for maintenance or operations.

- Infrastructure Training & Advisory Team, Southern Afghanistan

A Whole of Government Effort

The military is only a part of IW strategy and planning, and should not be a sole course of action in itself, but rather should seek to establish favorable conditions for the other instruments of national power to operate within. In the context of IW, many campaigns and operations may not be led by the military. Unified action that includes all relevant agencies (US government, PN, multinational, and nongovernmental) is essential for successfully dealing with IW challenges. A US whole-of-government approach leverages skill sets and capabilities that do not traditionally reside within the armed forces, but have direct application to IW. Effective working relationships between people and organizations have repeatedly proven key to success in IW.

The IW Plan

IW falls near the middle of the range of military operations, with peacetime and steady-state on one end and traditional warfare on the other. This presents a challenge to the IW planner because the current DOD operations planning construct has significant differences on either end of this spectrum. For steady-state operations, the planning construct at the operational level of war includes campaign plans and subordinate posture plans, regional plans, and individual country plans. For contingency planning, the construct includes operation orders, operation plans, concept plans, base plans, and commander's estimates. Within the Air Force component, the IW planner should mirror the planning construct used by the respective combatant command, either steady-state or contingency. In addition, it is imperative that the IW planner is represented in the combatant command's strategy development and planning processes, ensuring Air Force capabilities are incorporated into the joint plan from the initial stages.

If the combatant commander uses a campaign plan to address IW activities, the Air Force forces (AFFOR) staff (typically the A5) leads component planning in the form of a commander, Air Force forces' (COMAFFOR's) campaign support plan and individual country plans. The air operations center (AOC) should support the AFFOR staff in this effort. If the combatant commander uses a contingency planning construct, the AOC (typically the strategy division) normally leads component planning in the form of an air operations plan. The AFFOR staff supports this planning effort, as only the AFFOR staff can complete the plan with respect to administrative control and Service-unique responsibilities.

Congressional and Office of the Secretary of Defense Considerations

There are numerous laws and policies that must be adhered to when drafting IW strategy and plans to assist PNs build capacity and capabilities. For example, many of the congressional authorities tied to relevant funding often have restrictions on both how the funding is used and for how long they can be used. In addition, there are often restrictions on what technology and capabilities can be shared with PNs. In terms of developing a planning timeframe, gaining approval can often take time and must be taken into consideration.

Strike Planning

Strike planning includes the full spectrum of capabilities that can be brought to bear to precisely achieve effects in support of the desired end state. Since IW is a struggle for the population's allegiance, the effect of any engagement operation on the population should be carefully considered. In determining the appropriate capability to achieve the desired effect, planners should look at effect, duration, and consequences to ensure direct and longer term indirect effects are anticipated.

Strike planning has unique considerations in IW scenarios. A primary objective for the US and PN during counterinsurgency (COIN), for example, is to restore the rule of law. A second-order effect of executing strike operations is that they remind the population that this objective has not been achieved. There is potential for collateral damage from any weapon. If US forces conduct the strike, there may be the perception that the PN government is dependent for its survival on foreign forces. Combined, these may have the indirect effect of delegitimizing the PN government in the public's perception. Nevertheless, strike operations have a place in COIN, since the ability to hold targets at risk throughout the operational area helps the US and PN set the tempo of operations and seize the initiative from insurgent forces. The precision and lethality of airpower often provide the most discriminating application of firepower to COIN forces.

Strike planning should be designed to employ PN airpower resources to the greatest extent possible. Properly trained and structured teams of Air Force experts, ranging from planning liaison to tactical operations personnel, offer potential for PN unilateral and US/PN combined actions against high-value targets. Use of these options serves to enhance the legitimacy of the PN government while achieving important US security objectives. Just as in traditional warfare, attacks on key nodes usually reap greater benefits than attacks on dispersed individual targets. For this reason, effective strike operations are inextricably tied to the availability of persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), and are the result of detailed target systems analysis that identifies and fully characterizes the targets of interest (networks, people, objects, and entities). Persistence in IW is critical since there is little to no notice for target opportunities. IW planners may want to consider more use of airborne alert than they would during traditional operations.

Non-Cooperative Governments

Most IW from the US perspective is conducted in support of a PN against common IW adversaries such as insurgents or terrorists operating witin that nation. However, sometimes IW is conducted against or within a non-cooperative state. Traditionally, this has been accomplished with special operations forces (SOF) conducting UW to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow the non-cooperative state through or with an underground auxiliary, or a guerilla force in a denied area. While UW has been a traditional core mission of SOF, the use of conventional forces in UW may be more common in the future. This will require

extensive coordination between SOF and conventional forces. In addition, UW has traditionally confined itself to operations against a single hostile state or occupying power. Many of the activities take place either within the hostile or occupied state or in neighboring countries that either directly or tacitly supported efforts against the hostile state. This construct is changing as non-cooperative states have ever-increasing global connections and interests. The increasingly trans-regional nature of IW may require joint forces to act against an adversary's vital interests that may reside outside traditional borders.

Failed or Undergoverned States

Conducting IW against non-state adversaries operating within failed states poses several unique challenges. Denied or non-governed areas may provide potential sanctuary for transnational terrorist networks and other non-state adversaries. These areas may be under the direct control of insurgents. If the failed state has a nuclear weapon or other chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear program, Air Force capabilities may be critical to support US efforts to secure or eliminate the program. In some cases, US personnel may find themselves in austere locations in underdeveloped countries. Furthermore, the locations from which they will work and live may not provide adequate security, health standards, and communication infrastucture. There may be a degree of lawlessness and disorder. Given these issues, US personnel may be responsible for their own security, communications, and well-being. In such scenarios, the US may be the primary actor and be responsible for both military and political actions. Thus, a large force may be necessary to bring security to such regions.

Pitfalls Within IW

Many pitfalls in IW are the same as those associated with traditional warfare—overreach, poor planning, inadequate strategy, improper resource allocation, etc. Some pitfalls, though not unique to IW, have a greater impact during IW activities. As operations in IW are very population-centric, planners should remember to look at objectives through the lens of the PN and the adversary, not only that of the United States. This pitfall is called mirror imaging, i.e., projecting one's own attitudes, beliefs, cultural mores, and ideologies on the adversary and local populace. For example, actions based on Western ideologies may have dramatically different results than were intended when they are executed among non-Western populations. Also, it is important for planners to avoid "templating"—assuming experiences and lessons learned in one location will automatically apply to another location. An

Experience in one location cannot be assumed to apply to the environment of another. Over-emphasis on experience gained in a particular operation and environment can lead to inaccurate conclusions about the requirements and capabilities needed elsewhere, and could result in conceptual inflexibility in both hardware and general support.

—Air Force Manual 2-5, *Special Air Warfare*, 10 March 1967

example would also include superimposing doctrinal models while building IW partner military capabilities. Hierarchy and communication structures may not apply to different cultures.

Another significant pitfall occurs because seemingly tactical actions and decisions may have strategic consequences in IW scenarios even more than in traditional war. For example, indigenous civilian casualties caused by air attack often garner more media attention than do equivalent casualties caused by ground weapons (like small arms and mortars). Since indigenous populations are normally a center of gravity in IW operations, such collateral damage may reduce US influence and legitimacy among relevant populations, thus impeding rather than aiding achievement of desired end states. This result is contrary to most desired objectives in IW, and should be avoided if at all possible. Robust and integrated information operations (IO) are essential to mitigate these pitfalls. A poorly executed IO campaign can exacerbate the situation.

Airpower's Ability to Overcome Physical Considerations

Airpower's speed and flexibility allow US forces to surmount geographic hurdles more rapidly than ground forces. However, in IW, proper operating locations are paramount to enable the reach and capacity in order to achieve the objectives and present the COMAFFOR with the best access and engagement opportunities. The decentralized nature of ongoing operations is particularly challenging as the COMAFFOR provides critical support to both air and surface forces throughout the theater. For example, air mobility and combat support may enable sister components to maintain and sustain their forward operating bases when overland resupply is not practical due to geographic constraints or enemy surface threats.

IW-Unique Planning Considerations

When conducting IW activities, it is important for the COMAFFOR and staff to understand some IW-unique considerations. Application of the airpower tenet of centralized control and decentralized execution is accomplished at subordinate levels to support decentralized execution. ISR operations in IW may differ from those in traditional warfare. In IW, ISR often seeks small, dispersed, concealed targets versus large targets in the open. Successful prosecution of such targets, as well as self-defense and force protection, is significantly improved through the application of advanced ISR technologies. ISR also relies heavily on human intelligence (HUMINT) as PN personnel can more readily engage the population, survey and help to shape the human terrain, and collect information about the adversary. Air Force HUMINT personnel or linguists with the appropriate language abilities may be available for use, however, the COMAFFOR should employ PN assets first. Other Service/agencies may have available HUMINT elements as well. Because it is vital to engage with the PN population, several small forward operating locations may be required. It is not uncommon for many of these bases to be operated by other Services with small, collocated Air Force elements. In such situations, the COMAFFOR should take special

care to ensure proper administrative control support for Airmen attached to, or collocated with, non-Air Force organizations.

Operating From Remote Locations

In IW, small unit employment of forces from remote locations may become more prevalent. This is especially true when conducting early shaping and deterring operations. Operating in remote areas has numerous implications. It may increase requirements to live off the local economy or incur greater reliance on satellite communications due to lack of secure land lines.

Major environmental factors affecting planning and execution include physical and psychological pressures from hostile elements, exposure to extensive human suffering, social fragmentation, political instability, and economic impoverishment. Difficult terrain, physical isolation of population groups, and poorly developed infrastructures often impede counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations.

Given such environmental features as poor infrastructure, limited reachback, and increased risk, it is essential that Air Force personnel operating from forward locations as combat aviation advisors, embedded trainers, and advisors for either UW or foreign internal defense are organized, trained, and equipped to operate for extended periods of time independent of traditional support structures. Experience indicates that personal safety and performance are maximized when personnel are organized into teams with mutually supporting, interdependent skill sets. These teams should be capable of operating autonomously with maximum self-sufficiency, which in turn supports reduced presence and logistics signature while deployed. However, the potential for larger scale operations in IW may arise. Commanders may still need to support and provide for Air Force forces operating from multiple areas. The requirements for support may be drastically different for each operational area. This may create increased demand for airlift throughout the theater. All of these factors emphasize the importance of clearly stated command relationships and chain of command.

Strategic Communications and Information Operations

Adversaries employing IW realize they cannot achieve their desired ideological or political objectives through conventional force and seek to achieve public support for their cause (or at minimum acquiescence to their presence) by creating problems and instability that can be blamed on the government. Disinformation and propaganda campaigns targeting the populace are very effective means of achieving these goals, especially when tribal, ethnic, and religious differences can be leveraged or played against each other.

All operations should be integrated to promote governmental legitimacy. As no single component has a monopoly on the information environment, a joint approach integrated with governmental and civilian efforts is essential. This ensures that the cumulative psychological effect of operations works towards defeating the ideologies of a

government's opponents and does not send conflicting messages to the populace or fuel the insurgents' disinformation and propaganda campaigns.

Partner Nation Fragmentation

Nations susceptible to subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to their security may be characterized by various forms of social, economic, and political fragmentation and by a lack of a unifying national identity within population groups who resist or are denied integration into the national community. Some factors which contribute to this fragmentation include religion, political and ethnic alienation, separatism, lack of accessibility to government resources by certain groups, poor income distribution among social classes, poor economic opportunities, and disenfranchisement or lack of other political rights. Situations most likely to involve Air Force IW activities are prevalent in developing nations where public services, industrial infrastructures, and aviation infrastructure are relatively primitive by Western standards. For additional information, see Annex 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

IW Technology and Capabilities

IW is about "right-tech," not about high or low-tech. Both high and low technology assets have applicability in IW. Commanders should understand the appropriate technology to apply to the specific operational or tactical problem. Designers of IW operations should carefully examine the attributes that best match challenges and seek appropriate airpower tools. Airpower tools adapted to work in austere environments with minimal logistical support to be operated by, with, and through PNs, and require significant persistence with very low operating costs may suggest a custom force structure. Planners should balance the utility of custom force structure adapted to IW with force structure designed for and survivable in traditional conflict, but be able to operate in an IW conflict. A key consideration in this balance is cost of operations over the significant time periods typical of IW.

Mixing Hybrid and IW

The Air Force should be prepared to simultaneously conduct irregular and traditional warfare operations. The nature of a single conflict can easily shift between types of warfare. Failure to understand or anticipate shifts often leads to fighting the wrong type of conflict, or focusing on the wrong effects for a given conflict. IW and traditional warfare are not mutually exclusive, and both are often present in the same conflict. Air forces designed for conventional combat have the added advantage of creating theater deterrence effects when used in IW roles. While these assets may often have capabilities in excess of the specific requirements for IW, they can limit the nature and amount of third party interference with the IW partner. Finding a critical balance in capabilities is essential to overall success in both types of conflicts.

Persistent Versus Episodic Engagement in IW

Planners should be sensitive to the political, bureaucratic, and fiscal realities on both sides that may cause engagement to be episodic. Where appropriate, Airmen should attempt to apply vision and advocacy as a counterforce. Episodic engagement often is insufficient to lead to lasting change or capability development. Individual episodes of capacity building often rapidly decay as individuals leave, focus shifts, authorities expire, or there is a lack of a supporting framework of training and evaluation. Interpersonal trust, and cultural, political, and bureaucratic complexities often require significant time to understand to be effective.

IW Assessment

Assessment involves evaluating the integrated effects of the IW operation, the impact on various adversaries, the requirements for subsequent operations, and the influence of IW activities. These tasks include collecting information and conducting an assessment of operational effectiveness to update situational understanding and adjust future planning activities. The desired objective is the ability to measure progress toward mission accomplishment and use the results to adjust actions accordingly.

During IW operations Airmen should outthink, outperform, and adapt faster than the adversary locally, regionally, and globally in order to deny them the ability to set conditions favorable to their goals. Local commanders within the operational area should continually assess employment and support activities to determine the effects and implications of their actions while following the JFC's overall intent. The ambiguities resident within IW require frequent adjustment of operational plans to ensure desired effects are achieved while avoiding specifically designated or unintended negative consequences.

Continuous operational assessment and adjustment are best achieved at the lowest appropriate operational level. Operations should be flexible and integrate both civil and military activities, to include the supported government and coalition partners. Significant C2 interoperability challenges in joint, interagency, and multinational operations typically involve incompatible equipment and standards, language barriers, differing C2 procedures, lack of PN experience, and inadequate PN logistics infrastructures to maintain modern communications equipment. Commanders should be fully cognizant of these limitations and structure processes for transmitting information and orders appropriately.

In most forms of IW, operational assessment will be more subjective than in traditional warfare. When there is not a large enemy fielded force and clear supporting infrastructure, there may be far fewer metrics available that can be easily quantified. Since a large part of the desired effects deal with feelings and perceptions among the local civilian populace, rather than with more conventional measures such as

percentage reduction in combat power, operational assessment personnel should train to deal with more intangible metrics. Likewise, commanders should be ready to make decisions based on inputs from their assessment teams that may be subjective and incomplete. The US should not impose its own views on the PN population. Rather, it should take PN perspectives into account and emphasize the importance of the PN taking the lead.

In recent years, established best practices and lessons learned have proven operational effectiveness can be very difficult to measure; thus, feedback through a strong operations assessment and lessons learned process is essential to strategic success. Complex localized conditions and issues require an adaptive strategy and assessment process. Measuring lethal and non-lethal effects in an operation is challenging. Determining which operations are effective and modifying those that are not are critical to adjusting strategy. As part of the assessment process, Airmen and other US military members should bear in mind the long-term implications of their experiences and document/share those significant lessons learned and best practices which could be useful to future planners, operators, and decision makers (e.g., using tools such as the Global Theater Security Cooperation Management System and Joint Lessons Learned Information System).

Aviation Enterprise Development

While assisting partner nations build the capability and capacity to address shared IW challenges can achieve operational and tactical success, it is also important to emphasize how important developing the aviation enterprise of partner nations is from a strategic perspective.

While the US Air Force does not lead US Government efforts and decisions concerning global aviation enterprise development, it has a huge stake in those decisions, especially in terms of both enabling PNs to effectively address mutual national interests, but also in gaining access vital to conduct operations in support of US national interests, and help continue to shape the the global air domain in the future. Therefore, when Airmen plan and execute strategy and operations related to IW, they should keep these strategic viewpoints in mind and advocate this perspective to ensure:

- ✪ PNs have the aviation resources to achieve internal security and to contribute to regional stability
- ✪ The international community can effectively respond to crises anywhere in the world.
- ✪ The global aviation enterprise is safely operated, secure, and well-supported.
- ✪ The United States becomes the aviation security partner of choice to nations with emerging aviation enterprises whose stability against irregular threats supports US national security interests.

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ANNEX 3-2 IRREGULAR WARFARE

AIR FORCE CAPABILITIES AND IW EXECUTION

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Many Air Force capabilities have been identified as best practices in the conduct of irregular warfare (IW). Planners should consider capabilities and best practices when developing IW plans for the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR).

Appreciating Airpower's Reach

Airpower is more than dropping bombs, strafing targets, firing missiles, providing precision navigation and timing, or protecting networks. It is also a way of influencing world situations in ways to support national objectives. Through careful building of partnerships, Air Force forces can favorably shape the strategic environment by assessing, advising, training, and assisting {partner} nation air forces in their efforts to counter internal or external threats.

- Volume 1, *Basic Doctrine*

AIR FORCE CAPABILITIES

The Air Force should avoid unilateral operations, and assume that partner nations (PN) cannot always independently execute military operations when US interests are at stake. The Air Force's asymmetric IW capability lies with collaboration. Relationships, cultural understanding, and the ability to integrate Air Force capabilities with other military and non-military organizations are key for success.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

IW is a very complex and dynamic environment that requires an adaptive and dedicated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) force. ISR operations, target development, and an understanding of the socioeconomic principles by ISR personnel and commanders provide the Airmen with the best opportunities to successfully achieve appropriate effects. Joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment builds understanding of political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure systems, as well as the cultural factors in a conflict that enable friendly forces to target for specific effects within the operational environment. Intelligence products should provide the commander with the fullest possible understanding of all entities involved in the conflict. Near-real time ISR and precision location also help build commanders' situational awareness even if they are not used directly in targeting. When working with the IW partner, effective ISR is a critically important tool.

Air Force ISR operations in IW include the full spectrum of intelligence disciplines across air, space, and cyberspace. Intelligence disciplines such as geospatial intelligence, signals intelligence, and human intelligence (HUMINT) provide synergy to operations. In addition, special operations forces' (SOF's) unique manned and unmanned deep capability provides valuable adversary ISR for the joint force commander (JFC). Triggers for operations often rely on one of these ISR disciplines and often this intelligence is derived from non-Air Force sources. Air Force intelligence planners and operators should be integrated and involved with national, joint, coalition, and host nation partners; these embedded personnel can more easily acquire unfiltered and current insights and interaction with PN counterparts. Air Force intelligence personnel should understand and assist with ISR plans and operations to ensure effective use of assets and focused collections. ISR collections and their associated processing, exploitation, and dissemination operations can be long duration efforts with little to no payoff, or short duration with immediate payoff. Regardless, intelligence personnel should justify this weight of effort to commanders and commanders should understand the importance and time requirements of target development.

Target development is important in conducting IW. The Air Force's capabilities are heavily leveraged to develop the target sets. ISR assets and analysts are vital in identifying enemy capabilities, centers of gravity and command and control (C2). Another important factor in IW is managing the social, political, and economic consequences of operations as well as minimizing traditional collateral damage. For every action there will be a reaction, and often in IW the local populace's reaction may

seem irrational or unwarranted. Planners should closely examine cause and effect relationships of operations. Failing to anticipate popular perceptions or the potential effects of enemy propaganda can turn a successful mission into a strategic setback because of the loss of popular support (both in the area of responsibility (AOR) and possibly at home).

Government legitimacy is often a key target in IW. If a government is unable to provide basic services (security, rule of law, basic governance, water, electricity, sanitation services, infrastructure, etc.) the population can become hostile or apathetic. This may allow hostile forces to thrive or move freely. Furthermore, it is important that intelligence planners understand the cultural dynamics throughout the operational environment. Indications of socio-economic stressors or cultural stress can be indicators of a contested operational environment. It is imperative for intelligence personnel to identify and articulate the appropriate courses of action to the commanders. For example, security might be obtained temporarily in a key area with precision lethal strikes, but might be secured in the long term by enabling social or economic improvements. Such analysis requires thorough fusion of intelligence of all types from all possible sources, especially during the prelude to operations. For a more detailed discussion of Air Force ISR, see Annex 2-0, *Global Integrated Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Operations*.

Cyberspace Operations

Like air operations, cyberspace operations may strike directly at nodes of interest. For example, cyberspace operations may hinder or disrupt insurgent operations, or at least require them to expend resources defending their cyberspace assets.

Information Operations

The effective implementation of information operations in IW is critical to achieving US military objectives. In IW, populations are central to the conflict. Information-related capabilities and activities are integrated in order to create significant impacts on adversary, neutral, and friendly populations.

The rapid flow of information from around-the-clock news, blogs, social networking, and text messaging has changed the world. The ability of social networks in cyberspace to incite popular support, organize protests, and spread ideology is not limited by geography or time. The continued proliferation of information technology assets, especially mobile platforms, have profound implications for US forces and PNs during IW operations. Commanders at all levels should consider the ability of neutral and hostile forces to shape the battlespace due to the speed, availability, and low access barriers to information pathways.

It is vital to keep in mind the importance of information operations across all phases of an IW operation. Information operations (IO) should be the supported capability during shaping and deterrence phases, as well as during stability and support operations. IO

can be used to bolster the legitimacy, not only of US actions, but the PN government that is engaged in the conflict as well. Through the integration of information-related capabilities and activities, the US can aid the PN in establishing internal security, defending from external aggression, and building partnerships within the region. HUMINT is key to IO in support of IW, particularly in planning and executing military information support operations, perception management, and public affairs, especially since the enemy also has the ability to run an IO campaign as part of their strategy.

During Operation ALLIED FORCE (OAF), NATO recognized the need to counter the Serbian propaganda apparatus. The Serbians were using a radio relay station next to St Mark's Cathedral in Belgrade to pass propaganda within Serbia and neighboring countries.

NATO used a kinetic option to destroy the relay station in order to deny the Serbians the use of this asset for propaganda.

As seen in the images below, precision bombing resulted in a tactical success, however; it was also successfully exploited by Serbian propaganda. The kinetic option caused civilian casualties and within three hours the relay station was operational and feeding the Serbian propaganda machine.

World opinion sided with the Serbian leader (Milosevic) over the appropriateness of the target[1] and an International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) was formed which stated "…NATO violated the prohibition of direct attacks against civilians and indiscriminate attacks and bears legal responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law."[2]

Ultimately, the ICTY determined there was no deliberate targeting of civilians or unlawful military targets by NATO during the campaign."[3] However, from an IW IO perspective, the kinetic option employed caused the US and NATO operational/strategic harm and required significant diplomatic efforts with the ICTY.

REFERENCES

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2. ***Camppeace.org***
3. ***www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/Issues/Texts/ICTY001.htm***

Conventional Forces Supporting IW Operations

At the JFC's direction, the Air Force may engage in combat operations to meet PN and US objectives. Supporting a PN's IW efforts will most likely present limitations and constraints not often found in traditional warfare. The need to maintain the PN's legitimacy and its leadership role in IW may result in less efficient tactical employment of airpower, but should ultimately be more effective (e.g., flying more sorties using PN capability rather than one US sortie). Support to IW will most likely be a long-term commitment and require a sustainable operations tempo as well as the appropriate force requirements. The COMAFFOR should consider the effect of sustained operations on assets and personnel. Force rotation plans should be coordinated and understood between both organizations. The level of effort may change as the conflict evolves requiring the ability to surge when and where required. Understanding that the nature of the conflict may change multiple times requires planners to continually rely on feedback and assessment in order to shape operations and modify existing plans.

When an IW partner is incapable of countering the threat, the Air Force may be tasked to provide direct support that does not commit US personnel to combat. Such support encompasses Service-funded activities that improve PN air force effectiveness without duplicating or replacing efforts to create or maintain PN capabilities. Air Force activities should emphasize the PN's combat role. These support activities may include:

- Command and control—create a tailored air operations center-like capability that integrates PN capabilities and leadership.
- Communications—open channels to use Air Force communications assets.
- Positioning, navigation, and timing aids—provide equipment and training.
- Intelligence collection and analysis.
- Geospatial intelligence and cartography—ensure National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) products are available to PN.
- Air mobility and logistics—provide training and fly in conjunction with PN forces.
- Logistics support—provide theater experts and reachback to US logistics pipeline.
- Civil-military operations—civil affairs, IO, and humanitarian and civic assistance.
- Medical operations.
- Security operations.

Combat Support

Combat support operations in IW may be designed to support US-only or multinational operations, and enable PN airpower capabilities against irregular threats. Combat sustainment of forces entails transporting materiel, supplies, and personnel to reinforce units engaged in combat within the operational area. Combat support may transition from an Air Force support role to the primary application of military force. The complexity and unpredictability of IW operations and activities present challenges to commanders, who should consider the different risks associated with employing combat support in IW:

- Operating in austere environments with limited infrastructure.
- Increased combat readiness for surviving and operating in increased threat environments to include CBRN environments.
- Increased security requirements.
- Extended logistical lines.
- Communications limitations.
- Multiple distributed operations.
- Medical operations.

The 332d Security Forces Group (SFG) at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, provided inside- and outside-the-wire security to ensure force protection, dominating the base boundary to ensure successful sortie generation. The SFG coordinated closely with the battlespace owner (US Army) to ensure information sharing and seams in the defense were covered. The SFG also integrated organic air ISR assets to aid aggressive patrolling to further enhance base defense efforts.

Finally, Security Forces and OSI were able to establish and leverage existing human networks to gauge US counterinsurgency (COIN) efforts at various mass gatherings in and around the base boundary. The combined COIN and HUMINT efforts of the entire 332d Air Expeditionary Wing resulted in an overall decrease of indirect fire attacks against the base by more than 50 percent.

Planners and leaders may be required to assess a PN's combat support capability as well as develop training and education plans to ensure full mission capability. Combat support capabilities may set the conditions for achieving the JFC's objectives by supporting non-military instruments of power during IW operations. As such, combat support should be responsive and sufficient to sustain the operational requirements of IW. For more detailed information on combat support, see Annex 4-0, *Combat Support*.

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (Strike Operations)

On 26 March 2006, an Air Force combat controller attached to a US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha team in Afghanistan orchestrated one of numerous examples of a successful joint air-ground operation in support of the Afghan National Army. Shortly into their mission, the team made contact with a large enemy force and rapidly assessed that they were surrounded on three sides by up to one hundred anti-coalition militants. While taking heavy and accurate enemy fire, the combat controller made radio contact with numerous aircraft and quickly talked them onto enemy positions and directed precise air strikes that enabled the team to break contact. Over the next six hours, the combat controller requested, integrated, and controlled A-10, B-52, AH-64, CH-47, and MQ-1 aircraft in support of the Afghan National Army and special operations mission. The professionalism and expertise of an embedded Airman and the precision and lethality of airpower, turned a potentially devastating blow to a maturing Afghan National Army unit into a tactical success.

Partner Nation Support with Air Mobility

Air mobility is essential when conducting IW operations, supporting US ground forces, and enabling IW partner capabilities. Air mobility operations may increase a PN government's capacity to govern and administer through presence and persistence in otherwise inaccessible regions of the country. They also physically extend the reach of public outreach and information programs. Air mobility provides a means of rapidly transporting personnel and supplies to contested areas. Air mobility-focused Airmen, integrated with surface forces, often increase the effectiveness of air mobility and resupply operations, as well as mitigating risk in those operations.

Specifically trained airlift forces provide airland and airdrop support to special operations. Since there are a limited number of airlift assets dedicated to this mission, the principle of economy of force is particularly important. When performing these missions, airlift crews normally act as integral members of a larger joint package. Because these missions routinely operate under austere conditions in hostile environments, extensive planning, coordination, and training are required to minimize risk. Airlift used in a special operations role provides commanders the capability to create specific effects, which may not be attainable through traditional airlift practices. Commanders may also consider using indigenous aviation forces to support special operations forces in hostile or denied territory with air mobility and resupply, insertion and extraction, casualty evacuation, personnel recovery, ISR, and close air support (CAS). However, commanders should also consider the capabilities, proficiency and sustainability of the PN air force, as well as adversary threats, when determining the appropriate assets to employ. Indigenous capabilities should be responsive to asymmetric or irregular threats and circumstances. Indigenous forces also benefit from

the ability to be resupplied or evacuated to receive medical care. This can have a very positive effect on their morale as well as help legitimize the PN government among its own forces. For additional information, see Annex 3-17, *Air Mobility Operations*; Annex 3-05, *Special Operations*; and Annex 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

US combat air advisors train with Djiboutian airmen, gaining key lift and air transportation capabilities

TRAINING, ADVISING AND ASSISTING PARTNERS

Aviation Foreign Internal Defense

Although the US aviation role in foreign internal defense (FID) can be extensive, the term aviation FID (AvFID) generally refers to DOD programs for assessing, training, advising, and assisting PN aviation forces in the sustained use of airpower to help their governments deal with internal threats. FID is no longer a special operations force (SOF)-only or predominant arena. Conventional forces (CF) Airmen as well as Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) conduct the AvFID mission function. This mission area delivers CF air advisors and SOF combat aviation advisor capabilities with specific skill sets necessary to assess, train, advise, assist, and equip PN forces to sustain an aviation force capable of military operations. For more information on AFSOF IW capabilities, refer to Annex 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

El Salvador

In El Salvador during the 1980s, indigenous US-trained and equipped aviation forces gave the PN government unmatched mobility, ISR capability, and the ability to destroy drug-related cash crops that the insurgency relied upon for income.

National Guard State Partnerships

The National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program has developed partnerships between nearly every state's Guard Bureau (including Air National Guard units) and one or more nations throughout the world. State Partnership Program events are often subject-matter exchanges, demonstrations of capabilities, or senior leader visits, usually involving the following areas:

- Disaster management and disaster-relief activities.
- Military education.
- Noncommissioned officer development.
- Command and control.
- Border operations.
- Military medicine.
- Port security.
- Search and rescue.
- Military justice.

The Alabama National Guard (ALNG) and the country of Romania entered into a partnership July 1993. For more than two decades, the ALNG has fostered a solid relationship and continues to be a viable enabler in building capacity in Romania. The ALNG has conducted over 140 engagements since partnership inception focused on NATO interoperability, promoting political stability, assisting in the development of democratic institutions and open market economies, demonstrating military subordination and support to civil authorities, projecting US humanitarian values and providing support to deploying troops in support of the current war fight.

- Alabama National Guard home page

AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

AFSOF Considerations

Before the attacks of 9/11, SOF and CF normally operated in separate operational areas independently of one another. The Global War on Terror and associated IW activities expanded, demanding more than SOF was capable of supporting. SOF and CF found themselves operating in close proximity, increasingly dependent upon each other for mutual support. To achieve mission success, SOF and CF should continue to pursue interoperability, integrate operations when able, and provide mutual support when required. While both the commander, Air Force special operations air component, and the COMAFFOR are responsible for supporting the theater security cooperation

planning efforts through their respective components, the joint special operations air component commander and the joint force air component commander should continue to cooperate to achieve specific theater operational objectives.

AFSOC Capabilities

AFSOF are prepared to deliver SOF airpower capabilities across the range of military operations in support of joint operations. Because of inherent capabilities, characteristics, and specialized training, SOF are ideally suited to participate in US efforts to counter IW adversaries and threats and to conduct operations which promote stability and security.

ISR

Historically, IW efforts have proven to be ISR-intensive. AFSOF ISR capabilities focus on adversary “pattern of life” activities which provide critical intelligence for IW requirements.

Specialized Mobility

AFSOF specialized mobility personnel and assets provide essential movement of US and PN forces to remote and austere locations characterized by poor infrastructure and unimproved landing zones. AFSOF aircrews can also conduct personnel recovery operations. Certain aircrews are specially trained to support unconventional warfare operations and support.

Precision Strike

AFSOF manned and unmanned precision strike capabilities are particularly suited to conduct discreet and precise strikes with limited collateral damage. When required, AFSOF assets can conduct operations in urban environments.

Special Tactics Teams

Special tactics teams (STT) can be called upon to assist when the US Government wants to limit US ground personnel but is willing to place joint terminal attack controllers forward to direct US airpower. STT can also be used to control air operations in urban environments and limit collateral control. STT can also conduct virtual operations from remote locations. Finally, STT may also be used to support unconventional warfare operations and train indigenous forces.

Aviation FID

AvFID personnel can assist PNs develop counterinsurgency and counterterrorism capabilities. They can also assist with general aviation enterprise development. If UW

is embraced as a strategic option, Combat Aviation Advisors may also be required to assist with UW operations and support.

For more information refer to Annex 3-05, Special Operations, and 3-22, Foreign Internal Defense.

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ANNEX 3-2 IRREGULAR WARFARE

IRREGULAR WARFARE COMMAND AND ORGANIZATION CONSIDERATIONS

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Irregular warfare (IW) requires carefully conceived command and control (C2) structures and command relationships. In a theater-wide contingency, airpower may be limited and dispersed throughout the joint force commander's (JFC's) operational area with additional capabilities provided through reachback to functional commands outside the area of responsibility (AOR) (e.g., space support, air mobility, and cyberspace support). As friendly surface forces are geographically dispersed, the need to carefully balance centralized control with the demands of decentralized execution makes planning critical.

The air expeditionary task force (AETF) model in Annex 3-30, *Command and Control,* applies during IW. To properly integrate airpower across a joint force, the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) may distribute liaisons and joint air component coordination elements (JACCE) as necessary to provide two-way interface with appropriate joint force elements involved in planning and execution. In some cases, subordinate AETFs may be established and placed in direct support of other joint force elements.

During some IW scenarios, surface forces may decentralize their daily planning below a level with which the Air Force component can directly integrate. The COMAFFOR should emphasize that coherent air-ground planning may not realistically occur below the surface echelon that hosts an attached Air Force component C2 element such as an air support operations center. Surface commanders may have to aggregate their subordinate echelons' airpower requirements upward to a level supported by such an Air Force component C2 entity. Execution of Air Force component capabilities, however, may occur at lower levels such as joint terminal attack controllers, tactical air control parties, or air liaison officers.

Command relationships between the air and surface components may be established in a manner that provides the desired degree of control by the supported forces without sacrificing centralized control. This is normally done by the COMAFFOR, exercising operational control (OPCON) over Air Force component forces. This authority is delegated to the COMAFFOR by the JFC. The retention of OPCON allows the COMAFFOR to re-task forces, based upon JFC or combatant commander (CCDR) priorities, if the situation dictates. The establishment of effective command relationships

necessitates continuing dialogue between the respective joint and Service component commanders and their common superior commander.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

Design of Air Force C2 Structures in IW

Air Force commanders and planners should design their C2 structures to best balance limited Air Force resources with the requirements of ground forces that plan “bottom up” with very short response times. Commanders should establish relationships that encourage early consideration of airpower in operational plans. To the greatest extent possible, designers of Air Force command arrangements should seek to create stable allocations of air by assignment or allocation of forces so that airpower becomes predictable and establishes a sense of trust and ownership at subordinate levels that encourages the early consideration of airpower effects in plans. Airmen at all levels should be adept at explaining that key assets such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); special operations forces (SOF); and other low density/high demand systems are prioritized against the CCDR’s or JFC’s strategic objectives requiring centralized planning and allocation at the theater level. The complex operating environment of IW requires rapid, adaptive application of capabilities at the operational and tactical levels. Conducting multiple, separate operations against different IW adversaries in a single theater may require the CCDR to establish multiple joint task forces (JTFs).

C2 relationships in IW scenarios are usually dependent upon which commander in the joint force is supported. In many of these scenarios, the Air Force component may support multiple surface components in the same joint operations area (JOA) (for example, one surface force element may conduct counterinsurgency [COIN] while another force conducts counterterrorism [CT] in the same JOA). It is imperative the COMAFFOR understands the JFC’s priorities for supported land forces as well as special operations activities including support of SOF, and his staff produces relevant and timely Air Force component directives that communicate those priorities to subordinate echelons. In IW, effective decentralized execution requires focused support to ground force elements. Careful consideration should be given to command relationships. Regardless of what relationships are established, the key is to provide effective support that facilitates decision making capable of anticipating and outpacing the enemy.

Each IW scenario is unique, and command arrangements should be tailored to meet the requirements. To better integrate the capabilities that airpower provides, the Air Force component should have a robust presence on the JTF staff. The COMAFFOR and staff identify the issues and challenges and match Air Force capabilities to meet mission requirements. In most IW scenarios, ground forces push planning and decision-making to lower echelons, which may require more Air Force component liaisons at lower levels. IW operations highlight the need for Air Force liaisons at lower supported echelons. When designing an Air Force component C2 structure, the COMAFFOR may also need to include appropriate elements from the “whole of US government,” coalition

partners, and IW partners. During IW scenarios, Airmen may operate with numerous different forces which have varying C2 and other communications and mission systems. These forces often leverage commercial off-the-shelf technology to accomplish missions. For Airmen to be effective, they should be as interoperable as possible. The challenge is that the Air Force must be able to develop, obtain, and rapidly field solutions that enable special operations and conventional collaboration with foreign partners. Air Force SOF (AFSOF) should be able to purchase and use commercial or military systems faster than traditional acquisition methods permit to support the IW mission. Some of these systems should be with low attribution. Airmen should incorporate cyber risk analysis in their overall risk management process to determine the risks associated with leveraging military and commercial technologies quickly with foreign partners.

Supporting/Supported Relationships

Intertheater airlift and aerial refueling enable the US to conduct IW operations across the globe. In some cases, cyberspace and space-based capabilities allow US forces to conduct global operations without leaving their permanent base, while global strike operations may be generated from and return to continental US bases. These inter-regional capabilities are available simultaneously to multiple geographic CCDRs. As such, prioritizing these capabilities is increasingly important. In order to provide effective and timely support to the CCDR, these capabilities are presented through the COMAFFOR. The high demand for these capabilities may dictate that a supporting/supported relationship be established.

Distributed/Split Operations

Distributed operations, split operations and reachback are relevant to IW activities. Distributed operations involve conducting operations from independent or interdependent nodes in a teaming manner. Some operational planning or decision making may occur from outside the JOA. Split operations are a type of distributed operations conducted by a single C2 entity separated between two or more geographic locations. A single commander should have oversight of all aspects of a split C2 operation. Reachback, which can be applied to both distributed and split operations, is the process of obtaining products, services, and applications or forces, equipment, or materiel from Air Force organizations that are not forward deployed.

The decision to establish distributed or split operations invokes several tradeoffs. When mission needs dictate, the COMAFFOR may empower commanders at subordinate echelons to provide timelier support to ground forces.

Conventional Forces-Special Operations Forces Relationships

C2 of SOF is normally executed within a SOF chain of command. The C2 structure for SOF depends on objectives, security requirements, and the operational environment. In complex environments SOF have found supporting to supported command relationships are extremely agile and beneficial to both SOF and conventional forces (CF). Day to

day, AFSOF are under the operational control of the theater special operations command (TSOC). TSOCs are the primary theater special operations (SO) organization capable of performing synchronized, continuous SO activities. The TSOC plans and conducts operations in support of the geographic combatant commander across the range of military operations. Depending on mission requirements, TSOCs may form the appropriate C2 organization such as a joint force special operations component, a special operations joint task force, or a joint special operations task force. To ensure the proper planning and execution of theater-wide SO aviation missions, unity of command provides the most effective employment of limited SO aviation assets. AFSOF are normally placed under the OPCON of a joint special operations air component commander (JSOACC). SOF may also require joint force air component commander (JFACC) support, to reduce risk to SOF mission success by providing air superiority in the joint special operations area. By gaining and maintaining freedom of movement/freedom from attack, the JFACC provides an umbrella of protection that facilitates and enables the success of SOF missions. This support requires detailed integration and is normally coordinated through the special operations liaison element (SOLE) in the theater air operations center. For more information on SOF C2, see JP 3-05, *Special Operations*, and Annex 3-05, *Special Operations*.

Embassy Relationships

A whole of government approach is prudent in any scenario to best apply the full range of instruments of national power in support of national security strategy. However, in IW it is especially important for military operations conducted outside of declared combat theaters where the State Department's Chief of Mission is the approving authority on military action. Each party may have distinct roles based on the respective legal authorities delineated by US law. Therefore, it is important to understand what limitations exist and that a collaborative relationship necessary to exercise the relevant instruments of power is established.

COMAFFOR SUPPORT OF IW OBJECTIVES

The objective of IW is to assist a partner nation (PN) to gain legitimacy and influence over the relevant population to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will. The process by which the COMAFFOR arrives at a C2 architecture is the same for any activity within the range of military operations (ROMO).[1] In addition to decentralized execution considerations, the potential significance of theater air control system (TACS) elements, combat support elements, public affairs, base operating support, distributed communications, and military information support operations at forward operating locations should not be overlooked.

Volume 1, Basic Doctrine, establishes the basic philosophy for decentralized execution:

> Execution should be decentralized within a command and control architecture that exploits the ability of front-line decision makers (such as strike package

[1] Annex 3-30

> leaders, air battle managers, forward air controllers) to make on-scene decisions during complex, rapidly unfolding operations… . As long as a subordinate's decision supports the superior commander's intent and meets campaign objectives, subordinates should be allowed to take the initiative during execution.

In addition, not all IW activities are conducted through the air operations center (AOC). Some activities, such as Air Force support to reconstruction, joint expeditionary tasking elements, etc., are best directed by the COMAFFOR through the A-Staff functions.

In situations where IW operations are distributed among multiple subordinate operational areas, a single, theater-level COMAFFOR may not possess the requisite degree of situational awareness occurring at the tactical levels. In some cases, the COMAFFOR may delegate some aspects of planning and decision-making to subordinate Airmen positioned at lower levels within the TACS. Increasing the role and authority of subordinate Airmen may provide more effective uses of Air Force capabilities.

COMAFFOR Integration w/Other DOD-Partner Nation Efforts

Both traditional warfare and IW use elements of security cooperation (SC) to help a PN eventually become self-sufficient and take care of its own challenges with organic resources. These activities permeate all operating environments and can occur during all phases of conflict. SC initiatives are established jointly by the CCDR and the US ambassador (and his/her country team) assigned to a particular PN. Therefore, the command and organization for SC includes input and planning with the US Department of State (DOS) and can include other governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

COMAFFOR Integration with Other Instruments of National Power

The conduct of IW often requires whole-of-government cooperation for success. The COMAFFOR should be prepared to integrate military activities with the other non-military elements of national power: diplomatic, informational, and economic. Proper integration of all instruments of national power leverages the capabilities of all participants to achieve US objectives. In addition to the military elements of power, the COMAFFOR contributes to the CCDR's effort to shape the AOR with the diplomatic element of national power before, during, and after IW.

To ensure availability and access to airspace, airfields, and PN facilities in the AOR, the COMAFFOR should be engaged with the DOS within the AOR. Diplomatic efforts are critical to planned or contingency operations. US embassies and consulates may provide regional information and are likely involved in ongoing security assistance.

Support to Partner Nations

Air Force forces should be tailored to support the PN government's ability to bolster its legitimacy and influence over the relevant population. These activities include, but are not limited to, foreign internal defense (FID), CT, COIN, stability operations, and unconventional warfare (UW). Forces should be tailored to support the PN government's internal defense and development plan by providing capabilities that can address deficiencies in security and governance. If the security situation in the PN is particularly dire and PN capabilities are lacking or inadequate, US forces may be required to assume the lead for IW activities during certain times and locations; this will most likely require the deployment of a larger US force. A larger US military presence in the PN creates a more significant logistical, political, and cultural footprint. Consideration should be given to basing forces outside the PN.

Afghan Special Mission Wing (SMW)

Integrated with the Afghan SMW, AFSOC combat aviation advisors (CAA) alongside joint and combined SOF counterparts introduced and integrated fixed wing capabilities that continue to revolutionize how Afghan special operations forces fight. Armed with the right authorities, in the first year alone, CAAs accompanied Afghan counterparts on over 120 combat operations totaling in excess of 3000 flight hours. To date, CAA have enabled the SMW crews to unilaterally conduct casualty evacuation saving Afghan lives, conduct fires coordination with Afghan ground and helicopter assault forces, and conduct night vision device (NVG) take offs and landings at remote airfields. In less than two years, CAA have qualified, trained, accompanied, and integrated unilateral NVG Afghan aircrews and aircraft resulting in Afghan-only CT operations.

- Air Force Special Operations Air Warfare Center

Expect minimal PN support from a nation where the government is unable to conduct its own operations requiring an AETF to possess robust capabilities for self-sustainment, combat support, reachback, and force protection. In such cases,

operations from theater bases may be warranted. However, political sensitivity or operational considerations may impose limits on the overall size of an AETF's in-region footprint, which may require that some Air Force forces operate from outside the region.

Air Advisors

Air advisors are personnel who communicate professional knowledge and skills to PN aviation personnel in order to improve PN airpower capabilities. Air advising is comprised of five core functions: assess, train, advise, assist, and equip. These activities are conducted "by, with, and through" the PN counterpart and can be accomplished at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. While these functions can be performed across the ROMO, they are often used to help shape the environment and deter future aggression. Air advising has historically been associated with SOF conducting aviation FID. As IW scenarios have become more common in Iraq and Afghanistan, the demand on SOF assets has significantly increased, and CF are more frequently used as air advisors. In addition to full-time air advisors, the USAF employs numerous personnel to perform the five air advising activities on a part-time or as-needed basis. Combat Aviation Advisors (CAA) are responsible for the conduct of special operations activities by, with, and through foreign aviation forces. They are a standing AFSOC force organized, trained, and equipped to conduct FID, UW, and security force assistance. In addition to maintaining the ability to assess, advise, train, assist, and accompany foreign aviation forces, CAAs specialize in integrating partnered aviation capabilities into larger special operations and conventional efforts. Specifically, CAA units are tasked with maintaining expertise in the application of SOF Mobility, ISR, light strike, and combat support functions. These personnel are deployed to nations as part of mobile training teams, extended training service specialists, etc. For further information and C2 specifics on SOF CAAs and CF air advisors, see Annex 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense* and AFTTP 3-4.5, *Air Advising*.

Airmen supporting Peruvian maintenance personnel.